

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

[BEGIN AUDIO]

[TECHNICAL]

DANIEL MARTINEZ: All right. The following oral history interview was conducted on November 9th, 1992, at Midway Island. The time was 8:15 AM. The subject is Mr. Ned Titlow. The interviewer is Mr. Daniel Martinez, historian for the National Park Service. The oral history project is a cooperative effort of the United States Navy, COMNAT Base Pearl Harbor, Barber's Point Naval Air Station and the State of Hawaii Historic Preservation Division and the National Park Service.

[TECHNICAL]

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Please state your full name for us.

NED TITLOW: Ned Ashton Titlow.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: And your current age.

NED TITLOW: I'm 40-- I'm 68.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: And your current address.

NED TITLOW: 3782 Milan St, San Diego, California, 92107

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Date of birth?

NED TITLOW: February 13th, 1924.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: And place of birth.

NED TITLOW: Allentown, Pennsylvania.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Did you go to grammar school there in Allentown?

NED TITLOW: No, we moved to California when I was four. I went to Ocean Beach Grammar School, Point Loma High School, and then I attended College Pacific University of Redlands, and ended up at San Diego State University, where I got my degree.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Great. Did you get your degree before the war?

NED TITLOW: No, after. I was in college a year or so when the--

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

DANIEL MARTINEZ: How many in your family?

NED TITLOW: I have two sisters, mother father. My two sisters are still alive. My parents are dead.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Two sisters and you.

NED TITLOW: Yes.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Any of them in World War II at all?

NED TITLOW: No.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: And your mom and dad, were they together all through your formative years?

NED TITLOW: Yes, mm-hmm, yes, until they died.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Where were you on December 7th, 1941.

NED TITLOW: I was at home in San Diego.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: And how did you hear the news?

NED TITLOW: My paper manager called me up and asked me if I wanted to sell the extra. I asked him, "What extra?" He said, "Well, the Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor." So we turned the news on, and then I went down and sold papers. Interesting, I was selling them going down the street and two young men came out and they said, "You keep spreading rumors like that you're going to get us in war." They chased me down the street because they thought I was hyping something, I guess.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: How old were you then?

NED TITLOW: I was about 17 or 18.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: How did you come about enlisting?

NED TITLOW: I went away to College and Pacific and while I was there, a recruiter came through, enlisting for the reserve off [BREAK IN RECORDING]. The Navy said they had to have physics and math and all these other things, and I wasn't interested in that. The Marine Corps said, "You can finish whatever degree you were working."

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

I was in liberal arts, so I said, "Fine, that's for me." So I enlisted in class 3D, United States Marine Corps for reserve officer.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: So the reason you chose the Marine Corps was not so much for semper fi, but actually offered more opportunities.

NED TITLOW: Because I didn't have to take math and physics, frankly.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Where did you go to boot camp at?

NED TITLOW: Well, I originally went in the V12 program. I hit the V12 program.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Can you explain V12 program?

NED TITLOW: V12 was, they took all the-- there was a V5 program which was for aircraft. V7 was reserve naval officers and class 3D was Marine Corps reserve officers, in college programs. So they combined all the three together and developed the V12 program. They put you in uniform and put you on various campuses, and I was sent to the University of Redlands. Which time I arrived, they said, "Well, I see you haven't had all these math and this physics," and I said, "Whoa! They told me that I enlisted, I didn't have to take these." They said, "The government has a new program now. Everybody takes it." So I got into it about a month and the professor in physics said, "You're not doing very well here. How come? What did you do in trig?" I said, "I haven't had any math courses." He said, "Well, you can't take this course." So I marched down to the administration office and said, "I've got to drop this, because I don't have the requirements." They said, "You can't drop it, because your units will be too few and you don't qualify, so you've got to take it." So I learned the origination of catch 22. I was dead in the water. I came out of that program in October of '43, and went into boot camp then in San Diego, and graduated Christmas Day, 1943.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What grade did you get in physics?

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

NED TITLOW: D--, I flunked it. But I had an overall average of a C minus. If I'd gotten a D in it, I would have stayed, but I just-- I don't know. I had a real block about physics.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Where did you go from there?

NED TITLOW: I went to boot camp and then I graduated from boot camp [INDISCERNIBLE] went to Elliott [PH] for about three weeks and sailed for Hawaii. Was in Hawaii till May of '44 when I came out here. I spent the rest of the war here.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Do you have any memories of boot camp you'd like to share?

NED TITLOW: Well, we were very fortunate. We were all V12ers. We'd been uniform for four months and learned all close order drills, extended order. We had the red book memorized and everything else, so really, boot camp was sort of a piece of cake for me. And the second thing that happened was, while the DI was inspecting, the first time he stopped for a guy about three members down the rank for me, and he said, "Do I know you?" He says, "Yes, you were a friend of my brother so and so." It turns out this DI lived about three doors down from one of the members of our platoon. And while a lot of the DIs got real horseshit, this guy realized that everything he was going to do was going to get back home and so he treated us-- he was rough. I mean, we were tough, but not all that mean stuff about washing the head in the middle of the night with a toothbrush and this kind of stuff. He never pulled any of that on us. In fact, he told us we did better when we arrived than when we left.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: You came out to Honolulu, and were you assigned to a unit at that time?

NED TITLOW: I was detailed to the guard company at Pearl Harbor.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: And then what happened next?

NED TITLOW: The third day, an officer came in and said he was looking for people who had had psychology in college and wanted volunteers. After doing one day of

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

guard duty at the brig there, I decided anything was better than this, so I volunteered and was picked and went out to Nankuli where we had tank training school, and we trained in tanks.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What kind of tanks were you training in?

NED TITLOW: We were training in the same kind, we had M3A1s. The reason we were picked for psychology, Captain Hale [PH] was returning to the United States, and his fiancée was a psychology major at Mills College. He didn't know anything about psychology. So there were two guys from Duke University that were psychology majors and every night they went down to his tent with psychology books and they had a month and a half, two months of psychology with Captain Hale and educated him in what psychology was all about so when he got home, his fiancée couldn't snow him.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: So this had nothing to do with tanks.

NED TITLOW: <laughs> That's how I got in tanks.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: How did they choose you as a driver? There's several positions in a tank.

NED TITLOW: I really don't know. I just know that I was picked as a driver. When we got out here, there was a replacement of about 30 guys and there was only about half of us that were picked to go into tanks, and I was one of them.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What was the name and model of this tank?

NED TITLOW: It was an M3A1 and the British called it the Stewart [PH]. But the Stewart was an earlier tank really, because in the early days, the first tanks came out were the M3, and that did not have a turret in it. The driver stood in the middle of the tank and he had sort of a yoke that went over his shoulder. Using that, he would keep aiming on the target he was trying to hit. The M3A1 developed a basket tank [BREAK IN RECORDING] gyro on it, that kept the 37 millimeter on target when you were going down over rough ground and so on. But it had the same driver and radio

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

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man bow gunner in the tanks, except that now with the basket in there, the only way you could get out was through the front. Before you could go out, exit the top too if necessary. So if the tank ever got hit, it was really difficult to get out of those M3A1s. You actually had to lift one, you had to lift about 100 pounds straight up and put a rod and hold it. Then you had to kick open another panel and lay it down over the front of the tank, and then you could exit. You can imagine, if that thing was on fire or something, that was not the way to go. And the poor gunner, the only way you had to rotate the turret-- I'm sorry. The radio operator, he had to rotate the turret, then he could climb up in the turret then out the top. And if the turret was stuck, there was no way he was going to get out, so it was really not a very exitable tank.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: And this was the tank you were trained on?

NED TITLOW: M3A1, right.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Wow! Describe the positions in the tank. How many men in the tank and what did they do?

NED TITLOW: There were four members. The driver, of course, operated the tank. Right on the floor next to him, across the transmission, sat the radio operator. The radio was on the right sponson [PH] if you see those things hanging out on the side, that was the right sponson. The radio was in the right side there. Then of course the tank commander sat above him, and he was also the loader for the cannon, and to his left, right up behind the driver, was the gunner and he had-- I'm sorry, I reversed it. The gunner was on the right and the commander on the left, same as the driver, because he's the one that would signal you. And the tank gunner had a periscope sight that was attached to the cannon. As it moved, it moved too, up or down or whatever and he would sight it in.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: How good a tank was this?

NED TITLOW: Well, against the Japanese, it was very adequate, because they really didn't have any very good tank, but in Europe where it was used, it was soon

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

obsolete, because it was so light. It was used for scouting purposes, but that was about it. Soon they developed the M5 which used twin Cadillac engines and was much more advanced.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What kind of power plant did you have in your tank?

NED TITLOW: We had a Continental Red Seal aircraft engine, a radial. A regular aircraft radial engine. It was a 250 horsepower engine.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Can you describe to me the noise level inside a tank?

NED TITLOW: I'll tell you what, when we flew out here, that's about what it's...

DANIEL MARTINEZ: So did you guys put cotton in your ears?

NED TITLOW: No, but we had earphones on all the time, so that sort of seals--

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Muffled it out.

NED TITLOW: Muffled it pretty well. We had helmets too of course.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What was the heat factor inside?

NED TITLOW: Fortunately this area wasn't too bad, but you get down further south where it was really hot and the temperature would go to 150 degrees very easily. It was very debilitating.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: When you left Honolulu, were you bound for Midway at that point?

NED TITLOW: Yes.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Did your tanks come with you?

NED TITLOW: No, no, the tanks were out here all along. The first tanks came in this island at the end of May when that railroad ship came out. The Kitty Hawk, I think it is. And they all floated six tanks, which were located her in the woods at that time. They were not used during the battle, because actually nobody came ashore, anything happen. And then later on, they stationed four tanks on this island and four tanks the other island. I understand the original tanks that came out here were the old M3s. But by the time I got here, there were M3A1s which were the newer ones.

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

They had four in the center, you know that center where the three runways went? In the middle of that is where those tanks-- I visited there a couple times in Eastern Island, and on this island, they were over here in the woods. The officers and the tanks had the woods. Everybody else was out in the scaevoli.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What was your first impression of Midway?

NED TITLOW: I thought it was kind of warm as I remember. I never really got used to living on such a small piece of land. Anything you can walk around in an hour is not big enough for me, but I didn't have much choice.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: You were stationed on Sand Island, is that correct?

NED TITLOW: All the time here in Sand Island, correct.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What was everyday life like once you got settled in?

NED TITLOW: Well, there were two periods. The first period was up until about February or March of '45. Then there was another period after that when things changed. When I first got here, we would operate five days a week. What we would do generally is take the tanks out in the morning and operate till noon, then come back in, have chow. We came back here for chow, it took us about three hours, four hours to clean the tanks down. Every time we operated, I took gasoline, 100 octane gasoline, and would wash down the tank compartment, get it so the walls were absolutely white and spotless. Everything had to be absolutely... I took a little brush and brushed off all the veins and all the aircraft engines and cleaned that all off, wiped everything off so that it was just absolutely clean, and the officer or I would check it to make sure it was okay.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What were the fumes like when you were doing that?

NED TITLOW: I tell you, it's a wonder I didn't die from lead poisoning. We didn't know about it in those days.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: So that was your cleaning fluid, was gasoline?

NED TITLOW: Gasoline, 100 octane gasoline was what we used, correct.

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Where was the fuel depot for the tanks?

NED TITLOW: It was this runway, the short runway, about halfway down, there were underground tanks down there for the aircraft. We used the same fuel as the fighter planes did here, so we'd use their fighter station and load up.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What kind of mileage did you get?

NED TITLOW: I don't think it was very good.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Can you guess?

NED TITLOW: We never really checked it.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: It wasn't a problem, right? You weren't paying for the gas.

NED TITLOW: No, that's right.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Can you give me some of the highlights of your stay here in Midway?

NED TITLOW: Well, we had a few exciting times, so to speak, but the only one that was really interesting was in-- I don't remember when it was. It was either in '45 or-- pardon me. Most likely late '44. President Roosevelt came out to the Hawaiian islands, and then he went to Alaska. And his convoy, it was super secret, nobody knew anything about it. For some reason, this base wasn't notified of it, I guess, because early one morning, we went to condition red. They said there was an enemy fleet off to the east of our island here, a number of ships and so on. The infantry moved out of the barracks and moved over to our place and we locked and loaded, ready for an invasion we thought was coming. But it turned out-- the most interesting thing is, I never saw so many planes going so many directions at the same time. These fighter pilots were crazy. Some of them would almost take off across the runway, hardly turn into the wind and they were airborne. These old Chancefort [PH] V wing, Go winged Corsairs really-- you'd have them thundering in every different direction for ten or 15 minutes. It made you realize what was happening. But by mid morning, the convoy identified itself who it was, and then we

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

stood down to condition two, until they were out of range, and then we went back down to normal. But that was the only time that we ever really had any threat that I know of, we presumed threat.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: And Roosevelt did not come ashore?

NED TITLOW: No, he didn't. He sailed by.

[TECHNICAL]

DANIEL MARTINEZ: I'd like to ask you about some of your regular routine here on Midway. Can you elaborate?

NED TITLOW: Well, up until about February or March of '45, the way we did it, as I said, we operated-- tanks were out almost every day and we'd operate in the morning and clean them up in the afternoon. On Saturdays, we would stand inspection, which was not with tanks, but just in front of the Quonset hut that we'd have. And on Sunday, it was holiday routine. But after about May or so of 1945, we had a Colonel Weaver, as I remember here, and he said, "Men, the war's passed us by. There's no point in us knocking ourselves out." So at that time, we started getting up an hour earlier at 5 o'clock in the morning, and we'd operate till maybe 10 o'clock, come back and clean our tanks, go to chow, and the afternoon was free then. They had organized games and so on, so the last-- well, maybe it was later. Somewhere between March and May of 1945 on, life got to be very comfortable out here. We had a real fortunate-- interesting, one thing that Weaver did say-- I remember [INDISCERNIBLE]. We also had Colonel Listbaum [PH] here too, but I don't know which one it was. I remember him telling us that we had one of the best records of any Marine Corps unit in the Pacific and because it gave him a good record, he would see to it that we got State-side. And we all went State-side early. Some guys only had maybe 20, 30 points, and when we got to the replacement depot in San Diego, they couldn't believe that some guys with such short-- fortunately, I had about 60 or 70 points, so I got out as soon as I got State-side. But he was a fine

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

officer. One thing he did tell us is that the 6th defense battalion had the lowest venereal disease rate of any unit in the Pacific.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What do you attribute that to?

NED TITLOW: <laughing> Nobody out there! No opportunity maybe, I don't know. There was only one person in the 18 months that came down with any--

Q: [INDISCERNIBLE]

NED TITLOW: Well, I mean, these are sub notes to history, after all.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Yeah, this is for posterity.

Q: How did that feel, [INDISCERNIBLE] that the war had passed you by? Was that a good feeling?

NED TITLOW: Well, I tell you, about halfway during the time here, I went to Captain Watts, who was our officer in charge, and I told him that I didn't come out here to sit around on an island all the war. I'd like to see some action, because that was right after Tarawa and Saipan and so on. So he told me, he sat me down. He says, "Ned, I want you to turn around, go back to your barracks and forget you even came down here, because you don't know what you're talking about, and you're better off staying right here," and that's what I did. Captain Watts, by the way, came out in a draft of 12 tank officers. When they hit Hawaii, the officer in charge said there was a billet out here and there were two men that were married. He said he drew straws and Watts came out here and became this tank commander out here. The other 11 people went into the Pacific. Seven of them were killed and all the rest came back in hospital ships or were wounded so badly, they were no longer ambulatory. So he was the only one that walked back to the States at the end of the war, out of the draft of 12 officers he was with. So he said the turn of fate sometimes is something.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What did you do in your spare time here?

NED TITLOW: We were in the woods here. We were quite close to the beach, near the cable station, so we did a lot of swimming. They had intramural sports, softball.

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

We played down at the seaplane hangar and there was volleyball. We played football in the sand. Some of us did the Armed Forces education courses and so on, and did a lot of reading, and walked the beaches some degree. It was not encouraged. You were encouraged to stay pretty much in your own place, and people weren't encouraged to walk around the island and snoop or see what else was going on. In tanks, we were moving around all the time, so we had a lot more freedom than some did.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What was your impression of the defenses of the island?

NED TITLOW: Well, in February of that year, they reduced them in half, all the seven inch, all the five inch, everything. All the coastal artillery were closed down and they kept some of the 90 millimeter and a few of the 40 still activated. They had the infantry group cut in half. There was only about 100 of those left and then the four tanks. I never really was too concerned. I really didn't feel any immediate threat. What I really worried about more than anything was, they told us this island was honeycombed. Every time that seven inch cannon went off, this island really just rocked, literally. It was like a point 5 earthquake or more. And somebody said, "One of these days, that honeycomb's going to let go and you guys are going to collapse." So every time that seven inch went off, I did my prayers, really. I was more afraid of that seven inch than I was about any Japanese.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Thought the island was going to sink?

NED TITLOW: Thought the island was going to collapse. It sounds ridiculous, but if you've ever been around a seven inch when it went off, believe me, this island, really, it was just like a major earthquake. You had to take all the stuff off the shelves. In the mess hall, you took all the dishes down and everything onto the floor, because when those things went off, this island was terrible.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What was it like driving one of those tanks?

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

NED TITLOW: It was the most fun you ever wanted. It was a delight. I was a driver for about six months, then I became a tank commander, but driving a tank, if I could have afforded one when I got out of the service, I would have bought one, just to...

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Well, there's some of them still around.

NED TITLOW: Well, I know. A lot of people own them too. There's quite a cult.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Some people have remarked that Midway was a crossroads in their life. Would that be true for you?

NED TITLOW: I tell you, when I came here, I used to stand guard duty down the beach, around the cable station on down to the fuel depot. After about a month or so, I thought, "Boy, this is going to be awful boring here." So what I decided to do, I'd had enough psychology, I thought introspection. I would go back and think about all the things that happened to me, where I was going, what I was doing, people I'd admired, what I'd admired about them and so on. I spent most of the time out here, I would be an era, a period in time, and try to remember everything about it that I could. I finally came to the conclusion that to make life meaningful for myself was most likely a life based upon service to my Lord would be the way to go. I've always followed that and I've been very active in my church and very active in a lot of volunteer organizations and things. I've always felt that a Christ directed life was for me, because I saw people who liked money and I went through the Depression. I saw people that lost everything in the Depression. Some of them committed suicide. I had a close relative that died because he'd had money and all of a sudden, he had none and his purpose in life was gone. I looked at my own family. My mother based her whole life on the family, and others that I've known family. Kids turn out differently and kids leave and kids don't like their parents. If that was your foundation, you didn't have anything left for life. So I figured the Lord lives yesterday, He lives today and lives tomorrow and if I based my life on Him, why, He would always be there for me, and it's worked out very well for me.

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Is that how you changed the most or did you change in other areas?

NED TITLOW: Well, I obviously grew up in the Marine Corps. When I was in school, I was an extremely shy person. I just really did not project myself at all. I think that being a Marine, I made an NCO and ran a tank and so on. I think it gave me the confidence that I wasn't a klutz, and especially since I flunked physics. That was a black mark in me and I figured maybe I wasn't too good, but I was very-- it was a wonderful experience, Marine Corps and Midway.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: That's a lot of things that you gained. What do you think you lost during that time?

NED TITLOW: Well, I lost a period of my life. I had to go to school. I graduated when I was almost, what, '49. I was 24, 25 years old, 25 yeah. It set me back three years, but I really don't see it as a loss to anything, because I figure I gained so much more than I lost. I lost some time but I gained a real [INDISCERNIBLE]. It was like taking a sabbatical. I see teachers go out and they go into a different area and really realize the value of what they have, and redefine it. That's sort of what I did. I redefined my life, what I wanted to be and where I was going. To me, coming back here was almost a mystical, religious experience. I just can't tell you, I was moved to tears several times. It's just very, very meaningful for me.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Would you wish the same experience perhaps for your son?

NED TITLOW: Well, I have three daughters. I had one that wanted to drop out--

DANIEL MARTINEZ: If you had a son?

NED TITLOW: If I had a son, oh, absolutely. I think that when you're in your early 20s, a kid wants to take off a year and do something, God bless them. I really think you come back renewed in spirit, faith and what you're all about. At least, that would be my experience.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Why did you come back?

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

NED TITLOW: I [BREAK IN RECORDING] returning to the scenes of your youth. This was the turning point in my life. It was a religious, spiritual, metaphysical experience out here almost. I can't explain it. It was just something that happened to you. Life slowed down. It was a real slow pace. You had a chance to really-- and I really wanted to come back here and see it again.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Would it be safe to say you actually came into touch with who you were?

NED TITLOW: Absolutely, absolutely. I found myself. At least, I found the person I wanted to be.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Did that set the direction for the rest of your life?

NED TITLOW: Absolutely.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: In what ways?

NED TITLOW: Well, as I say, I decided that I was going to have a Christ directed life, and I don't mean in a fundamentalist sense. I'm a Lutheran by the way, and they're kind of a forma religion, but nevertheless, I think that it-- I put my foundation on the Bible, on a spiritual life, rather than on money or family or all these other things. It doesn't say those things aren't important, but that isn't my foundation. My foundation rests upon something much deeper and much more meaningful for me anyway.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Did you make new friends here?

NED TITLOW: Oh yes, still in contact with half a dozen of them. In fact, most of them belong to the organization we formed 17 years ago. We get together and talk about the good old days.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Were you in the early part of that organization?

NED TITLOW: I was at the first one. Al organized it, and I was the secretary for the first three or four years. Then I was out for a year or two, and then I became vice

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

president for a year, and then I've been president for the last eight years of the 6th defense battalion.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Now what is the name of this organization?

NED TITLOW: Sixth defense battalion and Defenders of Midway Island. We have about 800 members on our mailing list.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: What do you think is the most important thing that that organization does?

NED TITLOW: Well, I think the camaraderie is really something that-- when you were out here, you weren't told very much what was going on. One of the reasons I became a student of the Pacific War was to find out what the heck happened, why I was doing things and so on, and what was going on at the time I was out here, and why certain things were done in certain ways and so on. And I think to that extent, I became historian for our outfit too, because I had a minor in history in college, and I was always interested in it. I just think that [BREAK IN RECORDING] camaraderie and also, I think that we felt we ought to preserve what happened here somehow. We turned a lot of our stuff over to the Command Museum at the San Diego Marine Corps recruit depot. They have a lot of our artifacts and so on now. It was formed at the recruit depot, and we felt that was an appropriate place to make the full circle and came back there.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Is there anything in this conversation you and I have had that you'd like to talk about that we haven't talked about?

NED TITLOW: No. You're very thorough.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Okay, any more questions?

Q: You told me when I came to San Diego about where you lived, how you were in the woods.

NED TITLOW: Yes.

Q: As the only enlisted men there. Can you explain that whole story?

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

NED TITLOW: Right. Well, I don't know whether they felt tanks were so important or what, but they did locate us in the woods, just over here about 200, 300 feet, just beyond that command center. Right beyond it where the two colonels lived, the colonel or the lieutenant-colonel that was in charge, the CO and executive officer of 6th defense battalion. That's where their home was.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Was that structure there when you were here?

NED TITLOW: That was built at the very end of the war, in about May or June of '45. Just about 100 feet beyond it is where the colonel and his thing lived. Then you went just beyond them and the road turned to the left, and then there were four places where the tanks were put in. Then there was a shop and the NCO quarters and then about 200 feet beyond that was a Quonset hut where all the enlisted men stayed. We were the only ones. There was a small communications unit just beyond us, but that was right at the edge of the woods. Everything else in here was all officer country.

Q: Can you describe living in the shade versus living on the rest of the island?

NED TITLOW: Well really, the thing that struck me is, I don't remember it being this windy. But when I get over there in the woods, I can see, because the wind is broken and it isn't. But that's the one thing that struck me, how windy this place was. I guess I just wasn't out in it. We were in the woods all the time and it was very nice.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: Thank you very much. Appreciated the interview.

NED TITLOW: Thank you.

Q: I've got one quick question. Describe what it's like being the president of your organization.

NED TITLOW: Well, I always find it interesting being an ex-corporal and having a group of colonels and so on, on your board and talking to them, telling them what to do. It's sort of an interesting change of fate. I've always in my life-- one thing I learned here in Midway was to [BREAK IN RECORDING] and any time anything came

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS AZ_OHC_#342_Ned Titlow_11-09-92

Transcription Date: 09/21/09 - Transcriber: JC

down, I was offered the presidency or chairmanship, I've run organizations up as high as 5,000 people through the church and big conventions and so on. I always like to stretch my abilities. It's like exercising a muscle. If you don't try leadership, you never learn leadership. So I always, any time I had a chance to be leader or organizer of something, I've done it. I've done hundreds of groups-- well, it seemed like hundreds, but many, many, many groups. I've organized civic organizations and I've been president of a lot of different things. I just like to exercise my leadership ability, because the more you exercise it, the better you become at it, hopefully.

DANIEL MARTINEZ: That's a wrap.

[TECHNICAL].

NED TITLOW: Sorry, I lost my balance.

[END AUDIO]